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advantage of this invention is that the two keyboard segments, when connected to each other, are held in any tilted position. A further advantage of this invention is that the two keyboard segments can be separated from each other a maximum of 90° in the plane of support and 90° in the plane perpendicular to the support plane in one embodiment and 40° in the other embodiment. Still another advantage of this invention is that each keyboard segment, irrespective of whether it is connected to the other or separate, can be disposed in various tilted positions relative to its support surface.

For purposes of exemplification, particular embodiments of the invention have been shown and described according to the best present understanding thereof. However, it will be apparent that changes and modifications in the arrangement and construction of the parts thereof may be resorted to without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention.

What is claimed is:

1. A keyboard including:

first and second segments, each of said first segment and said second segment having a plurality of keys;

each of said first segment and said second segment having an abutting surface;

connecting means for connecting said first segment and said second segment to each other for enabling relative movement between said first segment and said second segment, for holding said first segment and said second segment in any position to which first segment and said second segment are moved relative to each other including holding said abutting surfaces of said first segment and said second segment in abutting relation, and for enabling disconnection of said first segment and said second segment from each other;

and said connecting means including:

a ball;

a first element on one of said first segment and said second segment having a partial spherical surface for engaging a portion of said ball;

a second element on the other of said first segment and said second segment having a partial spherical surface for engaging another portion of said ball;

and releasably connecting means for releasably connecting said first element, said ball, and said second element to each other to retain each of said first segment and said second segment in any position to which each of said first segment and said second segment is moved.

2. The keyboard according to claim 1 including:

each of said first segment and said second segment having three pivotally mounted support means disposed on its bottom for supporting each of said first segment and said second segment, each of said three pivotally mounted support means being separately movable between a rest position and a support position in which said pivotally mounted support means extends beyond the plane of the bottom of said first segment or said second segment on which said pivotally mounted support means is pivotally mounted for at least one selected length;

two of said three pivotally mounted support means on each of said first segment and said second segment being disposed adjacent the rear of each of said first segment and said second segment;

and a third of said three pivotally mounted support means on each of said first segment and said second segment being disposed adjacent said abutting surface of each of

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said first segment and said second segment and the front of each of said first segment and said second segment.

3. The keyboard according to claim 2 in which each of said pivotally mounted support means includes:

a first pivotally mounted support;

and a second pivotally mounted support having a greater length than said first pivotally mounted support, only one of said first pivotally mounted support and said second pivotally mounted support being utilized at any time to raise the portion of said first segment or said second segment to which said pivotally mounted support means is attached.

4. The keyboard according to claim 3 in which said second pivotally mounted support has means for enabling nesting of said first pivotally mounted support within said second pivotally mounted support when said first pivotally mounted support and said second pivotally mounted support are in their rest positions.

5. The keyboard according to claim 4 including:

extension means supported by said second pivotally mounted support for selectively increasing the effective length of said second pivotally mounted support;

and said first pivotally mounted support having receiving means for receiving said extension means when said extension means is retracted within said second pivotally mounted support and said first pivotally mounted support and said second pivotally mounted support are in their rest positions.

6. The keyboard according to claim 2 in which:

each of said three pivotally mounted support means is disposed adjacent a different corner of each of said first segment and said second segment on which said three pivotally mounted support means are mounted;

and said two pivotally mounted support means have the same pivot axis and said third pivotally mounted support means has its pivot axis perpendicular to the pivot axis of said two pivotally mounted support means.

7. The keyboard according to claim 6 in which each of said pivotally mounted support means includes:

a first pivotally mounted support;

and a second pivotally mounted support having a greater length than said first pivotally mounted support, only one of said first pivotally mounted support and said second pivotally mounted support being utilized at any time to raise the portion of said first segment or said second segment to which said pivotally mounted support means is attached.

8. The keyboard according to claim 1 in which said releasably connecting means includes:

a shaft;

each of said first element, said ball, and said second element having enabling means for enabling said shaft to extend therethrough;

said shaft having a head on one end to engage said second element;

and a knob attached to the other end of said shaft and engaging said first element to hold said first segment and said second segment in any position to which said first segment and said second segment are moved.

9. The keyboard according to claim 8 in which:

said first element has an outer spherical surface;

and said knob has a spherical surface for engaging said outer spherical surface of said first element to hold said first segment and said second segment in any position